

Can we slow cancer through the power of positive thinking?

From savoring a piece of cake to hugging a friend, many of life's pleasures trigger a similar reaction in the brain—a surge of chemicals that tell the body “that was good, do it again.” Research published [July 13] in [Nature Communications](#) suggests this feel-good circuit may do much more.

Using lab tools to activate that reward circuit in mice, scientists discovered that its chemical signals reach the immune system, empowering a subset of bone marrow cells to slow the growth of tumors. The findings have yet to be confirmed in humans. But given the reward system is linked with positive emotions, the research offers a physiological mechanism for how a person's psychological state could help to stall cancer progression.

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[R]esearchers in Israel turned the mind-body question into an easier-to-measure physiological one: Would activation of the reward circuit have any effect on the immune system?

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In mice with implanted cancer cells, two weeks of daily reward circuit stimulation produced a powerful response—their tumors were 40 to 50 percent smaller than those in control mice that didn't get the brain activation.

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[T]he new mouse findings do not suggest cancer patients should quit taking medication and rely instead on positive thinking. They merely offer a possible mechanism for the latter's purported benefits.

Read full, original post: [Could Brain Stimulation Slow Cancer?](#)